

Message Text

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SUBJ: THAI MEDIA REACTION-- U.S. WELCOMES PROGRESS TOWARD ELECTED
THAI GOVERNMENT, OAKLEY SAYS

USIA FOR IEA, IOP/M, IBS, IPS, IOR/RIM

THE UNITED STATES WELCOMES THE "ACCELERATED PROGRESS TOWARD
ELECTED GOVERNMENT" IN THAILAND AND GREATER PRESS FREEDOM
TAKING PLACE UNDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRIME MINISTER
KRIANGSAK CHAMANAND, A HIGH U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL
SAID IN BANGKOK JANUARY 17.

ROBERT B. OAKLEY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS, TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE
AT THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB OF THAILAND THAT THE
KRIANGSAK GOVERNMENT MOVES, TOGETHER WITH BETTER OBSERVATION
OF DUE PROCESS OF LAW IN SEVERAL ASIAN COUNTRIES SHOW "THERE
IS MORE HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO HUMAN RIGHTS,"
AND THAT IT IS NOT ONLY THE U.S. THAT IS CONCERNED ABOUT
SUCH RIGHTS.

THE U.S. OFFICIAL SAID PATRICIA DERIAN, U.S.
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN-
ITARIAN AFFAIRS, IS "HAVING AN EXCELLENT EXCHANGE OF
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VIEWS" WITH THE THAI GOVERNMENT DURING HER CURRENT VISIT TO
THAILAND. SHE VISITED THE NONG KHAI AND LOEI REFUGEE CAMPS
TUESDAY AND WILL SEE THE LAM SING CAMP AND MEET WITH SOME
OF THE OCTOBER 6 DEFENDENTS WEDNESDAY.

OAKLEY, IN A WIDE-RANGING NEWS CONFERENCE AT THE
PRESIDENT HOTEL, AGREED WITH A QUESTIONER THAT THE U.S.

AND OTHER COUNTRIES WHICH TAKE HIGHLY SKILLED INDOCHINESE REFUGEES FROM CAMPS IN THAILAND, LEAVING UNSKILLED ONES BEHIND, CREATES A PROBLEM. BUT HE ADDED THAT IT IS "DIFFICULT TO CONVINCE" QUALIFIED, SKILLED REFUGEES TO REMAIN IN THE CAMPS.

HE DESCRIBED THE "BOAT CASE" REFUGEES AS REQUIRING MORE URGENT ATTENTION THAN THOSE WHO CAME HERE OVERLAND, BECAUSE THEY FACE POSSIBLE EXPULSION FROM COUNTRIES ON THE BOATS THEY USED TO FLEE VIETNAM. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID A BOAT CARRYING INDOCHINESE REFUGEES SANK AND MANY WERE DROWNED TWO DAYS AGO AFTER BEING PUSHED OUT TO SEA OFF MALAYSIA.

HE SAID HE IS IMPRESSED BY THE THAI GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO "SHELTER A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES. THEY HAVE LIVED UP TO THEIR INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS WELL AS THEIR OWN UNIQUE NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF GENEROSITY AND HUMANENESS IN ACCEPTING REFUGEES,." OAKLEY TOLD REPORTERS.

THE U.S. WILL CONTINUE TO ACCEPT INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, IS HALF WAY THROUGH A PROGRAM TO TAKE 15,000 ADDITIONAL ONES, WILL TAKE 7,500 MORE AND IS SEEKING LONG-TERM LEGISLATION FROM CONGRESS TO ACCEPT EVEN MORE REFUGEES, OAKLEY SAID.
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DISCUSSING U.S.-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS, OAKLEY SAID A "SEARCH FOR A MEANS" TO NORMALIZE WASHINGTON-HANOI TIES CONTINUES AND DESCRIBED VIETNAM'S DEMAND FOR WAR REPARATION AS A "FUNDAMENTAL OBSTACLE." HE NOTED THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS PASSED A BILL OUTLAWING U.S. AID TO HANOI.

ASKED ABOUT HANOI'S DESIRE TO HAVE RETURNED THE VIETNAMESE AIRCRAFT WHICH REFUGEES FLEW TO THAILAND AS HANOI SEIZED SOUTH VIETNAM IN 1975, THE U.S. OFFICIAL SAID WASHINGTON WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THAT SUBJECT WITH BANGKOK "AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME."

OAKLEY SAID RELATIONS BETWEEN ASIAN NATIONS AND THE U.S. HAVE "STABILIZED" NOW FOLLOWING APPREHENSION AFTER THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION BEGAN LAST YEAR AND TURNED ITS ATTENTION TO THE MIDEAST AND OTHER TROUBLE SPOTS. VISITS OF ASIAN LEADERS TO WASHINGTON AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS TO ASIA HAVE CALMED FEARS THAT THE U.S. WAS IGNORING THE REGION, OAKLEY SAID. "ASEAN STATES HAVE DONE A REMARKABLE JOB OF COPING WITH THE OVERALL REDUCTION IN THE U.S.

PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA," HE DECLARED, ADDING THAT ASEAN-MEMBERS HAVE INCREASED MUTUAL COOPERATION. THEIR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL STABILITY ARE "IMPRESSIVE," OAKLEY SAID AS ARE THEIR MOVES TO ESTABLISH BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH HANOI.

THE U.S. WILL REMAIN AN ASIAN-PACIFIC POWER, THE U.S. DEPUTY SECRETARY SAID, AND TOLD A QUESTIONER THAT THAI-U.S. MILITARY EXERCISES, SUCH AS THOSE SCHEDULED LATER THIS MONTH, THREATEN NO NATION.

QUERIED ABOUT THE SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT PLAYING A ROLE IN THE CAMBODIA-VIETNAMESE FIGHTING, OAKLEY SAID THAT NEITHER MOSCOW NOR PEKING "HAVE FULLY ENGAGED THEMSELVES" UNCLASSIFIED

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IN THE HANOI-PHNUM PENH CLASH, THOUGH "THEIR PREFERENCES ARE VERY CLEAR."

"YOU MAY HAVE A PARTICULAR REGIONAL MANIFESTATION OF A WORLD-WIDE REVALRY, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, YOU OBVIOUSLY HAVE A LOCAL SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH IS VERY IMPORTANT" IN EXAMINING THE CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE SITUATION, HE TOLD NEWSMEN.

OAKLEY FLEW TO RANGOON TUESDAY AFTERNOON FOR A VISIT WITH BURMESE OFFICIALS. DURING HIS FOUR-DAY BANGKOK STAY, HE MET WITH PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK CHAMANAND, FOREIGN MINISTER UPADIT PACHARIYANGKUL AND OTHER THAI OFFICIALS. MCGINLEY

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